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Project ERASMUS K2: “Cooperation to implement innovative methods for the assessment of medicinal plants with central roles in pharmaceuticals, agriculture and nutrition“ (EURO-PLANT-ACT)

KA220-HED - Cooperation partnerships in higher education

Contract No. 2022-1-RO01-KA220-HED-000088958

REPORT - TRAINING FOR STUDENTS

University of Calabria (P3)

03.06.2024 - 14.06.2026

Between June 3-16, 2024, student training took place at the University of Calabria, P3, Rende, Italy. This session was attended by 25 students from each partner university, as follows:

- Coordinator (UMFVBT) – Bora Larisa, Atyim Elisabeta, Jojic Alina Arabela, Handa Daiana, Goldis Floriana Diana, Vasii Sabina Ioana, Ruse Gratiana (7 students)
- P1 (USVT) – Dossa Agossou Sylvestre, Moraru Dragos, Negreci Samuel, Calota Madalina, Ibric Alexandra, Dragomir Christine (6 students)
- P2 (UNIOS) – Vukadinovic Lovro, Martic Bruno, Mak Maria Karla, Streinberger Luka, Peric Iva, Skiljevic Iva (6 students)
- P3 (UNICAL) – Crisafulli Fabiola, Pangallo Ludovica, Avolio Ilaria, Akinkurolere Adeleke, Greco Marcello, Santandrea Alice (6 students)

In accordance with the activities outlined in the project proposal, theoretical and practical demonstration sessions were conducted involving all attendees. The focus was on innovative methods for the biological characterization of plant extracts or essential oils and the evaluation of the safety and toxicological profile of plant extracts and essential oils with a central role in nutrition. The event agenda included both theoretical and practical sessions. The event began with the reception and registration of students, a welcome address by Prof. Filomena Conforti, a presentation of the host institution (University of Calabria), discussions about the program and organizational



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aspects, and a brief presentation of the EURO-PLANT-ACT project - “Cooperation to Implement Innovative Methods for the Assessment of Medicinal Plants with Central Roles in Pharmaceuticals, Agriculture and Nutrition” (Prof. Filomena Conforti, P3 - UNICAL).

The theoretical sessions included a series of presentations as follows: Theoretical aspects regarding the methods to obtain preparations from plants (Extracts and essential oils) (Prof. Filomena Conforti), Theoretical aspects regarding innovative extraction techniques (Mariangela Marrelli), Theoretical aspects regarding the rapid dynamic solid-liquid extractor (Filomena Conforti), Theoretical aspects regarding Research in Phytotherapy: from Ethnobotany to transitional medicine (Giancarlo Statti, Claudia Toma, Carmine Lupia), Theoretical aspects regarding essential oil extraction (Mariangela Marrelli), Theoretical aspects regarding phytochemical analysis of plant extracts and essential oils (Giancarlo Statti).

The practical sessions focused on: Visiting the research laboratories of the Department of Pharmacy Health and Nutritional Sciences, Practical applications regarding the preparation from plants, Visiting the research laboratories of the STAR Platform – University of Calabria, Determination of polyphenolic content of extracts obtained from plants at the Laboratory of Natural Product Extraction (UCA), Determination of flavonoid content of extracts obtained from plants at the Laboratory of Natural Product Extraction (UCA), Determination of phytochemical content of extracts obtained from plants using GC-MS at the Laboratory of Natural Product Extraction (UCA), and Determination of phytochemical content of extracts obtained from plants using HPLC at the Laboratory of Natural Product Extraction (UCA).

The students worked in teams, held group meetings, developed projects, and presented them on the topics discussed.

The student training program achieved its goal of exchanging best practices and training young specialists from complementary fields in managing the central role of medicinal plants.

Practical and educational activities were ensured with the participation of professors and specialists from each project team to guide the participating students. The training session for young specialists (students) also emphasized the importance and development of entrepreneurship for more active participation in society and the



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enhancement of professional development opportunities. Following the training activities, knowledge assessment tests were developed, participation certificates were issued, and each participant completed a questionnaire to evaluate the actions and knowledge gained.

The direct beneficiaries of the student training program were students from each partner university, selected through a detailed procedure agreed upon by all partners prior to the training sessions. The outcome of this learning activity, student training programs, is also reflected in the deepening of knowledge among specialists in complementary fields, thanks to the interdisciplinary and multicultural exchange of knowledge.

The students who participated in the training programs benefited from specialized knowledge enhancement, focusing on: interdisciplinary character (using medicinal plants with key roles in nutrition, pharmaceuticals, and agriculture), inclusion and social diversity (students from the three partner countries), sustainability (methods for processing medicinal plants in an environmentally friendly manner considering the context of globalization and climate change), and digitalization (through the adoption of teaching/learning methods based on the use of intelligent systems).



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